

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:
retrieving an authorization code;
sending a print job with the authorization code; and
checking whether the authorization code is valid, prior to enabling or
disabling the print job from printing.

2. The method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising printing the print
job if the authorization code is valid.

3. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the retrieving is performed
by an agent operating on a computer.

4. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the authorization code
comprises an expiration interval parameter.

5. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the checking of whether
authorization code is valid, is performed by a server.

6. The method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising assigning an
authorization code to an agent running on a computer when the computer logs
on to a network.

7. One or more computer-readable media comprising computer-executable
instructions that, when executed, perform the method as recited in Claim 1.

8. In a public computer service center where multiple computers can be connected to a communications link associated with the service center, a method comprising:

creating a request to log on to the communications link;
retrieving an authorization code from a host located on the communications link;

sending a print job to a printer with the authorization code embedded in a header of the print job; and

checking whether the authorization code is valid, prior to enabling or disabling the print job from printing.

9. The method as recited in Claim 8, wherein the public computer service center is a hotel.

10. The method as recited in Claim 8, wherein the public computer service center is an airport-based printing center.

11. The method as recited in Claim 8, wherein the authorization code contains an expiration interval parameter.

12. The method as recited in Claim 8, wherein the authorization code contains a quality of service parameter.

13. The method as recited in Claim 8, wherein an agent retrieves the authorization code from the host and assigns the authorization code to the print job.

14. One or more computer-readable media comprising computer-executable instructions that, when executed, perform the method as recited in Claim 8.

15. A system comprising:

a communications link;

an agent, configured to provide an interface between a computer and the communications link; wherein the agent assigns an authorization code to a print job sent by the computer, and

a monitoring device, attached to the communications link, configured to receive the print job and verify whether the authorization code is valid.

16. The system as recited in Claim 15, wherein the server verifies if the authorization code is valid by comparing the authorization code to a data base to find a matching entry.

17. The system as recited in Claim 15, wherein the server permits printing of the print job by a printer, if the print authorization code is valid.

18. The system as recited in Claim 15, wherein the authorization code comprises an expiration interval parameter.

19. The system as recited in Claim 15, wherein the authorization code comprises a quality of service parameter.

20. The system as recited in Claim 15, wherein the communications link comprises Ethernet access.

21. The system as recited in Claim 15, wherein the communications link is a communications network.

22. The system as recited in Claim 15, wherein the communications link is a switch.

23. The system as recited in Claim 15, wherein the monitoring device is a server.

24. The system as recited in Claim 15, wherein the authorization code is embedded in a header of the print job.

25. The system as recited in Claim 15, wherein the authorization code is part of an HTTP communication related to the print job.